

Weekly Column for July 14, 2005

What I look forward to most when I write this column is being able to bring a bit of good news to the website. Sure, we often have issues that need to be dealt with such as snow removal or water main breaks, but days like today are terrific, when I can simply talk about something positive.

With that mini-diatribes out of the way let me take a little while to talk about the latest designation for the City of Troy. Earlier this week we received a letter from the White House proclaiming Troy to be the latest municipality in the United States to be declared a *Preserve America* Community.

The future implications of this designation cannot be analyzed in a simple paragraph or a brief explanation. What is known is that we are one of a limited number of communities that have received the designation, and it does open Troy up to receive grant funding from the federal government that can be used in the planning stages of projects.

In the budget proposed by President George W. Bush for fiscal year 2006, there is a request for \$12.5 million in grant funds for which communities meeting the *Preserve America* criteria will be eligible to apply. These matching fund grants of \$10,000 to \$100,000 would go on a competitive basis to projects that preserve and use important historic resources for promotion of heritage tourism and other economic revitalization projects.

Instantly thoughts of riverfront revitalization danced through my head. Whether it is through Uncle Sam or the Burden Iron Works, by connecting with our past we can build a bright future. And what is more historical than Uncle Sam?

Recently the City Council passed legislation that allows my administration to move forward in an effort to secure a grant that will allow us to not only revitalize, but also redo Riverfront Park in downtown. This is just one possible project we could pursue with *Preserve America* funding.

We already directed our grants writer to look into the funding from the government to see what is available for the City of Troy.

In the meantime, we will be able have access to the *Preserve America* logo, have listings on a website for heritage tourism, and receive national recognition for our outstanding architecture and abundant history. As I said earlier in the week, it's another tool that can only help us in our future development.

Have a great weekend.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy